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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 002322

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: AFGHAN ELECTIONS: KARZAI ANNOUNCES BUT DOESN'T
RELEASE HIS PLATFORM

REF: KABUL 2067

Classified By: PolCouns Annie Pforzheimer, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) President Karzai announced his campaign platform to the press August 10. Important elements of his public statement included promises that he will, if re-elected:

- prioritize negotiations with the Taliban
- improve security, focusing more on building up the ANA and ANP
- do more to prevent civilian casualties
- establish good and sustainable relations with foreign countries, especially the United States; and
- hold a traditional Loya Jirga if elected and would invite the Taliban to participate.

In a reference to corruption, he added that he will not "repeat the problems of the past."

¶2. (C) Although the platform was announced and described to the media August 10, no document was distributed and palace officials tell us they have no authoritative version. (Note: Embassy has, and has translated and transmitted to Washington, an earlier 28-page version of the platform. End Note.) Palace Advisor Sebghatullah Sanjar told us that President Karzai, depending on the advisor he is listening to last, continues to waver over details of the platform. Sanjar said this was true in particular on issues of the status of foreign troops and the calling of a traditional Loya Jirga. (Comment: Karzai has made various campaign promises to different groups -- including us -- so may resist putting anything in writing during this sensitive campaign period. The palace continues to promise us a final version. End Comment.)

Strategy, not Policy?

¶3. (C) Karzai's Palace Chief of Staff Mohammad Daudzai told us privately August 8 that the timing of the platform being announced was a campaign strategy decision. He said that the push is concentrated on the final days before the election (ref A) to have mullahs explain the platform to voters in the mosques on the important final Friday before August 20. Daudzai said -- only half jokingly -- that since using the mullahs was a key method of conveying information to voters, part of the Karzai platform was a vaguely-worded promise that "life would be better for mullahs" if Karzai were re-elected.
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